

ensuing session, although quite prepared to deposit plans and take other preliminary steps for that purpose.

After a long slumber and spathy, the country seems to be arousing itself to a sense of the necessity of action in respect of improvements and great building undertakings. We reported last week of Southampton, and this week we may refer to the long stagnant city of Coventry. The Estates Committee of the corporation have reported in favour of new water-works, it appearing that of upwards of 7,000 houses in that city, not more than between 300 and 400 have water laid on to them; they recommended, also, a public cemetery, the church-yard accommodation being the same now for upwards of 30,000 inhabitants as it was when Coventry numbered only one-fourth of this amount; the improvement and cleansing of the now filthy river Sherborne is also advocated; and as Coventry has lately become an independent asile town, it is recommended to build or otherwise provide suitable "judges' lodgings," &c.

The committee formed for the purpose of carrying into execution the proposed pier at Hythe have selected from among the numerous designs submitted to them, the plans of Mr. John Elliott, architect, of Southampton and Chichester, and the committee having called in the assistance of a civil engineer to report on the practicability and construction of the design so selected, have since awarded the premium to Mr. Elliott.

The Lords of the Admiralty are about to enlarge Woolwich dock-yard, and form a factory for the manufacture of steam boilers.

The interior of Winchester Cathedral is undergoing restoration under the superintendence of Mr. Richardson, who restored the Temple Church.

#### RAILWAYS.

**Atmospheric Railway.**—The complete success of this undertaking is now established beyond all controversy. For the last fortnight trains have been running regularly between Dalkey and Kingstown, from two till five o'clock, with the utmost punctuality and uninterrupted regularity. Some thousands of passengers have passed to and fro on the line without the slightest accident occurring. The trips were suspended yesterday for a few days, in order to enable the line to be opened the entire way from Kingstown station to Dalkey. The permanent way is laid—the rails are down, and in the course of a week or so the entire line will be opened. The Dalkey station is in a state of forwardness, and there is every prospect of the works being immediately commenced to extend the line to Bray.—*Dublin Paper*, Oct. 27.

**Salisbury.**—The survey of a line between Salisbury and Bishopstoke is now in progress, preparatory to applying for a bill in the next session of Parliament to join the South-Western Railway at the latter point.

**New Branch Railway.**—It is stated that a junction line from the Swindon station, on the Great Western Railway, to the Andover road station, on the South-Western Railway, is in contemplation, and that surveys are now in progress. The distance we should suppose is about 40 miles.—*Andover Times*.

**Le Journal des Chemins de Fer** announces that the directors of the Rouen and Havre Railroad Company have concluded with M. Mackenzie and Brassey the most important contract ever made in France:—"The principal works on the Havre Railroad are the Bridge of Rouen, seven tunnels of an extent of 6,500 yards, and a viaduct of 27 arches in the valley of Barentin, being 33 yards in height from the arch to the centre. These works will cost from 13,000,000*fr.* to 14,000,000*fr.* They are to be entirely completed in May, 1846. The embankment and the tunnels are contracted for at a discount of 20 per cent. on the prices paid the same contractors for the Paris and Rouen Railroad. The cubic yard of embankment to be paid 1*fr.* 25*cs.* (i.e. British), the superficial yard of tunnelling 80*fr.* (nearly 3*fr.* British)."

Large numbers of men have been set to work on various parts of the London and Birmingham Railway, by order of the directors, at the different places where appearances of slips in the cuttings or embankments present themselves.

#### BUILDING GROUND.

ROBIN S. PHILLIPS.

*Measure of damages—Use and occupation.*

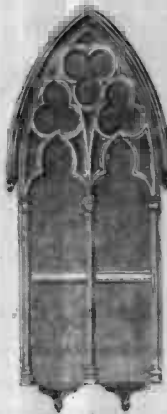
M. D. Hill moved for a rule nisi to reduce the damage or for a new trial. This was an action for the use and occupation of a piece of ground which the defendant had verbally agreed to take of the plaintiff upon a building lease for 99 years; but upon the lease being tendered, he refused to execute it, or to have any thing more to do with the ground. The only evidence to show that he had taken possession was, that shortly after he agreed to take the ground, he put up a board stating that applications for the renting of the ground were to be made to him, and that this board remained up a fortnight or three weeks. The present action was brought for five or six years' rent, and the plaintiff recovered a verdict for the whole amount. It was now submitted that he was only entitled to recover for that period during which it was shown that the board was up.—*Railway*.

#### PISCINA. PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL.

Sir,—I now forward you a sketch of a Piscina, in Peterborough Cathedral. I have not the exact dimensions, but the whole height is, I believe, about three feet.

This, as you will readily perceive, was originally a very delicate piece of workmanship, but I regret to say its beauty is now much impaired by the numerous lime-whittings to which it has been subjected. The curves are all worn off, and the tracery choked up with lime. It is a great pity that such waste and Gothic proceedings cannot be put a stop to; but it is too true in this as in many other matters, &c. that which is every one's business is attended to by none. I am, yours very truly,

W. H. J.



Piscina.



Section of Piscina.

\* Piscina.—A stone basin, or cavity, with niche, generally used as a drain, for the use of the great vessels in the collection of urine, &c. It was furnished with a pipe to carry off waste water. There were double piscinas.

#### ON READING STEPHENS' TRAVELS IN YUCATAN.

(From *Pulcher's Ladies' Memorandum Book and Poetical Miscellany*, 1844.)

Where are ye vanished, ye mysterious race?  
Ye for whose history's pen hath found to place  
In her proud page?  
As the bright dew-drop from the noontide rays,  
So are ye vanished from our eager gaze.

Sons of another age,  
We know how Rome has lost her queenly crown,  
How Athens' stars of glory have gone down;  
But what of ye?

Your halls and temples stand in ruined state,  
In silent pride and desolate;  
But where are ye?

Whose were the hands that rear'd with patient toil  
The mighty piles that strew with wreck the soil  
Of lonely Yucatan?  
Yain question! in the sleep of death are bound  
They whose proud vestiges alone are found:  
Alas for man!

The wandering stranger now with wonder awe  
Your haughty fane o'ergrown with clustered trees.  
Where scorpions brood.

The lonely Indian's are now rings alone,  
Where courtiers bent around a royal throne,  
And thousands trod.

Then fare ye well, ye children of the past,  
O'er whom oblivion's silent stream hath cast  
Its mournful awe,  
As the pure snow-mass from the spring's soft  
breath,  
So have ye faded from your native earth.

And sought the grave.  
H. D. S.

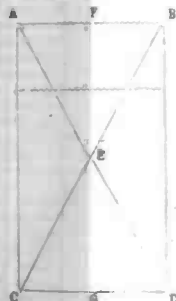
#### Correspondence.

PLAN FOR MEASURING INACCESSIBLE DISTANCES.

Sir,—The article which appeared in your last number, giving the details of a plan for measuring inaccessible distances, reminds me of a wonderful instance of intuitive knowledge of geometry evinced by a chief of one of the tribes of Western America, as related by Captain Murray, in his new work, entitled "Narrative of the Travels and Adventures of Monsieur Violet."

I have transcribed the passage alluded to, as I think it will be perused with some interest by the readers of *THE BUILDER*.

"The most remarkable instance occurred when we were about to cross a wide and rapid river, and required a rope to be thrown across, as a stay to the men and horses. The question was, what was the length of the rope required; i.e. what was the width of the river? An old chief stepped his horse forward, to solve the problem, and he did it as follows:—He went down to the side of the river, and fixed upon a spot as a centre; then he selected two trees, on the right and left, on the other side, as near as his eye could measure equidistant from where he stood. Having so done, he backed his horse from the river, until he came to where his eye told him that he had obtained the point of an equilateral triangle. Thus, in the diagram, he selected two trees A and B, walked back to E, and there fixed his lance. He then fell back in the direction E D, until he had, as nearly as he could tell, made the distance from A E equal to that from E D, and fixed another lance. The same was repeated to E C, when the last lance was fixed. He then had a parallelogram; and as the distance from F to E was exactly equal to the distance from E to G, he had but to measure the space between the bank of the river and E, and deduct it from E G, and he obtained the width of the river required.



"I do not think that this calculation, which proved to be perfectly correct, occupied the old chief more than three minutes; and it must be remembered that it was done in the face of the enemy."